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NEWS
FROM YOUR MUSEUM
THE ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM

Know your Museum better

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NEWLY HATCHED DINOSAUR "ARRIVES" AT MUSEUM

Dr. L.S. Russell, of the Royal Ontario Museum, wishes to announce the "arrival" of a baby dinosaur. Little Protoceratops, for that is his name, is actually only a realistic plaster model. He gives the impression of having just emerged from a broken egg half buried in the sand. There he sprawls, groggy, and somewhat bewildered.

This little dinosaur's parents were not large. They were only about five feet long, but their big cousin Triceratops, alias "Three-Horned Face", although a vegetarian, was a fearsome-looking giant who was probably a North American "dictator" a few hundred thousand centuries ago.

The eggs of Protoceratops were found in the red Cretaceous sandstone of Mongolia, several years ago, by expeditions from the American Museum of Natural History. Some were in circular clutches or "nests", and it has been suggested that the eggs, laid in the warm sands for incubation, were buried so deeply by the shifting sand that they were unable to obtain oxygen, and so never hatched.

This discovery is one of the most remarkable in the long history of dinosaur hunting.

"Show me the way to go home"

With a piece of stone, two tubs and some water you can have a compass. You can't put this particular one in your pocket because it weighs about three hundred pounds, but you can see it in the Royal Ontario Museum.

Many years ago, primitive peoples used to determine direction by placing a chip of magnetite, or lodestone, on a piece of wood and floating it on water, for they had discovered that a little needle of this mineral would always point the same way. In the Museum, the "needle", which weighs about one hundred and twenty-five pounds, rests in a bronze tub floating in water in a larger tub. You can make it swing quite quickly out of its normal north and south position by moving an iron disc which has been placed on a swivel in the cover. Without any contact, but purely by the pull of natural magnetism on the small disc, the large stone can be turned almost completely around.

The strange power of lodestone, or "leading stone", has given rise to some interesting legends. Sailors are said to have reported that while in certain waters they had great difficulty in steering their ships. Some ships were even said to have been battered to pieces on rocks from which they could not turn. There is the story, too, of how the shepherds on the hills of Greece would lose their shoes. The nails seemed to be pulled out; the shoes would fall apart, and the poor shepherds would have to return home barefoot. The truth of these legends is dubious indeed, but they do show that the "supernatural" power was felt long before it was understood.

A TROPICAL FISH SHOW

Tropical fish of thirty or more kinds are included in an exhibition in the Royal Ontario Museum arranged by the Toronto Aquarium Society for April 6th to 20th. Although the keeping of live fishes in homes has been practised since ancient times the hobby has only assumed large proportions in comparatively recent years. More than three hundred species have been found suitable for keeping in home aquaria but only a fraction of this number are widely kept. Among the favourites are many of brilliant colour, bizarre shape, or with interesting habits. Always popular is the Siamese fighting fish. This gorgeous fish is of a warm brown colour overlaid with a striking pattern of brilliant greens, blues, and bright red. It comes from Siam where it has been bred for centuries by the natives. Because of their propensity for fighting, males must be kept apart in separate aquaria. Other popular varieties to be included in the Museum show are paradise fish, fresh-water angel fish, swordtails, moon fish, zebra fish, head and tail-light fish, and butterfly fish.

PICTURES FOR PILLARS

To depict a stage scene in a space more than five times as high as it is wide seems an impossible order but the Japanese print artists of the eighteenth century performed many such miracles as this in designing the so-called "pillar prints". These were slender sheets ranging from about 25 to 40 inches in height, and only 4 or 5 inches wide, which were made to hang on the square pillars of Japanese houses. An exhibition of about fifty prints of this form will be on view in the print room of the Japanese section of the Royal Ontario Museum until the end of April. They are selected from the Museum's large collection of wood-block prints and they include the works of many of Japan's greatest print artists. The exhibition is of great interest for seldom does one have the opportunity of seeing at one time so many prints of this unusual and beautiful form. Furthermore these pictures cover the whole period of the development of wood-block prints, from those made with a single block to the elaborate designs employing many blocks which were produced in the beginning of the nineteenth century.

VISITING HOURS AT MUSEUM

Week days except Monday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Sundays 2 p.m. - 5 p.m.
Closed all day Monday.